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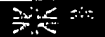
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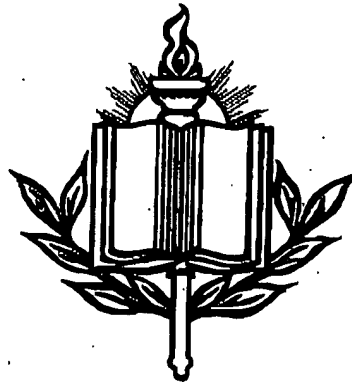
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# Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language



*The dictionary entries are based on the First Edition of **The Random House Dictionary of the English Language***

**GRAMERCY BOOKS**  
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**actinograph**

**actinograph** (ak tīn'ə grāf', grāf'), *n.* a recording actinometer. [ACTINO- + -GRAPH] —**actinographist** (ak tīn'ə grāf'ist), *adj.* —**actinographist** (ak tīn'ə grāf'is), *n.*

**actinoid** (ak tī'z nōid'), *adj.* raylike; radiate. [ACTINO- + -OID]

**actinolite** (ak tīn'ə līt'), *n.* *Mineral.* a variety of amphibole, occurring in greenish bladed crystals or in masses. [ACTINO- + -LITE] —**actinolite** (ak tīn'ə līt'ik, ak tīn'ə līt'), *adj.*

**actinometer** (ak tīn'ə mē'tər), *n.* a device for measuring intensity of radiation, usually by the photochemical effect. Cf. **actinograph**. [ACTINO- + -METER]

**actinometric** (ak tīn'ə mē'trēk), *adj.* —**actinometry** (ak tīn'ə mē'trē, -trē), *n.*

**actinomorphic** (ak tīn'ə mōr'fēk), *adj.* 1. *Biol.* having radial symmetry. 2. *Bot.* of certain flowers, as the buttercup, divisible vertically into similar halves by each of a number of planes. Also, **actinomorphicous**. [ACTINO- + -MORPHIC] —**actinomorph** (ak tīn'ə mōr'fē), *n.*

**actinomycetes** (ak tīn'ə mī'sēz), *n.* pl. *cons.* Bacteria, any of several saprophytic, filamentous, anaerobic bacteria of the genus *Actinomyces*, certain species of which are pathogenic for man and animals. [*C. N.*], *equiv.* —**actino-actino- + mycē < *Gk.* [unkn.]**

**actinomycete** (ak tīn'ə mī'sēt'), *n.* Bacteria, any of several rod-shaped or filamentous, aerobic or anaerobic bacteria of the family Actinomycetaceae, of the order Actinomycetales, certain species of which are pathogenic for man and animals. [prob. back formation from *N. L.* actinomycetids; pl. of actinomycetes] —**actinomycetous** (ak tīn'ə mī'sēt'ūs), *adj.*

**actinomycosis** (ak tīn'ə mī'kō'sis), *n.* *Vet. Pathol., Pathol.* an infectious, inflammatory disease of cattle and other animals, usually of the head, due to certain actinomycetes. Also, *lumpy jaw*, often suppurating tumors, esp., about the jaws. Also called **lumpy jaw**. [ACTINO- + MYCIS + -OSIS] —**actinomycotic** (ak tīn'ə mī'kō'tēk), *adj.*

**actinon** (ak tīn'ə nōn'), *n.* *Chem.* a chemically inert, gaseous, radioactive element isotopic with radon. It is a member of the actinium series. Symbol: *At*; *at.* no. 85; *at. wt.* 210. Also called actinium emanation. [*C. N.*]; see **actinium**]

**actinopod** (ak tīn'ə pōd'), *n.* any protozoan of the subclass Actinopoda, including the heliozoans and radiolarians, having stiff, radilike, radiating pseudopodia. [ACTINO- + -POD]

**actinopterygian** (ak tīn'ə ōpt'ē rē'jē ōn), *adj.* 1. belonging or pertaining to actinopterygii, a group of bony fishes. —*n.* 2. an actinopterygian fish. [*C. N. L.* actinopterygii] (pl.) (actino- ACTINO- + *Gk.* pterygion) (fin, *equiv.* to pteryg- (*s.* of pteryx wing) + -ion dim. suffix) + -AN]

**actinotherapy** (ak tīn'ə ō thēr'ē pē), *n.* *Med.* radiation therapy. [ACTINO- + THERAPY]

**actino-uranium** (ak tīn'ə ūr'ē ō's ūm), *n.* *Chem.* a radioactive isotope of uranium having an atomic mass of 235. [ACTINO- + URANIUM]

**actinouranium series**, *Chem.* See actinium series.

**actinozoan** (ak tīn'ə ō zō'ān), *n.*, *adj.* *Zool.* anthozoan. [ACTINO- + -ZOAN] + -AN]

**action** (ak'chjōn), *n.* 1. the process or state of acting or of being acted. The machine is not now in action. 2. something performed; an act; deed. 3. an act that one consciously wills and with which he is characterized by physical or mental activity (contrasted with passion): a crisis that demands action instead of debate; hoping for constructive action by the landlord. 4. actions, habitual or usual acts; conduct; He is responsible for his actions. 5. energetic activity: a man of action. 6. an exertion of power or force: the action of wind upon a ship's sails. 7. effect or influence: the action of morphine. 8. physical change in organic tissues or cells. 9. the function or functions as in muscular contraction. 9. any or manner of moving: the action of a machine or of a horse. 10. the mechanism by which something is operated, as that of a breechloading rifle or a piano. 11. a military encounter or engagement. 12. actual engagement in fighting an enemy. 13. military and naval combat: He saw action in the South Pacific. 14. *Slang.* a. an action gambling game; Where can I find a good action? b. profit, esp. quick profits: Cut me in for a piece of the action. 15. Poetry. Theater, the main subject or story, as distinguished from an incidental episode. 16. Theater, a. an event or series of events that form parts of a dramatic plot; the action of a scene. b. the part of the three unities. Cf. *unity* (def. 9). 17. the gestures or deportment of an actor or actress. 18. The dramatic expression of animation, movement, or emotion given to figures by their attitude, position, or expression. 19. *Lit.* a. a proceeding instigated by one party against another. b. the right of bringing it. 20. *Eccl.* a. a religious ceremony, esp. a Eucharistic service, b. the canon of the Mass. c. those parts of a service of worship in which the congregation participates. [*C. L.* *actio*; *r. late* *actō*], *equiv.* to *actus* (a deed) + -ion- + -is; *r. late* *actō* *equiv.* to *act*] —**actionless**, *adj.*

—**Syn.** 1. movement, operation. 2. ACTION, ACT, DEED mean something done; ACTION applies esp. to the doing; ACT to the result of the doing. An ACTION usually lasts through some time and consists of more than one act; to take action on a petition. An ACT is single and of slight duration; on *act* of kindness. DEED emphasizes the finished or completed quality of an act; it may imply an act of some note, good or bad, or a tremendous deed, a deed of valor. 12. *brush, encounter, fight, skirmish, box battle.* 15. *plot.* —**Ant.** 1. rest.

**actionable** (ak'chjō nā'bē), *adj.* 1. furnishing ground for a lawsuit. 2. liable to a law suit. [ACTION + -ABLE] —**actionably**, *adv.*

**Action Painting**, (*sometimes* *L.C.*) *FINE ART.* a development of Abstract Expressionism characterized chiefly by a calligraphic quality or by broad, vigorous brushstrokes.

**action sermon**, the sermon preached before the administration of the Lord's Supper in Presbyterian churches in Scotland.

**Acts** (ak'tēz), *n.* *Class. Myth.* a set of Rhodé and Helios' hours, when banished from his home in Rhodes, he came to Egypt, where he taught astrology. The Caliosé of Rhodes was said to be his tutor.

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**Act-um** (ak'ts am, -ch'əm), *n.* a promontory in NW ancient Greece; Actium and Cleopatra were defeated by Octavian and Agrippa in a naval battle near here in 31 B.C.

**active-ly** (ak'tiv-ē-ly), *adv.* -vated, -valing. 1. to make active. 2. *Physica*, *a.* to render more reactive; *active*: to activate a molecule, *a.* to induce radioactivity. 3. to aerate (wastage) in order to accelerate decomposition of impure organic matter by microorganisms. 4. *Chem.* *a.* to make (carbon, a catalyst, molecules, etc.) more active, *b.* to hasten (reaction) by various means, such as heating. 5. *Milit.* *a.* to create (a military unit or station) *b.* to place (a military unit or station) on an active status in an assigned capacity. [*Active* + *-ly*]

**-ac-tiv-a-tion**, *n.*

**activated sludge**, *sludge* (def. 8).

**acti-va-tor** (ak'tiv-ā-tor), *n.* 1. *Chem.*, *Biochem.* a catalyst. 2. any impurity in a mineral that causes luminescence. *Cf.* inhibitor (def. 2). [*Activate* + *-or*]

**active** (ak'tiv), *adj.* 1. constantly engaged in action; busy: an active life. 2. In a state of action; in action; existence, progress, or motion: active hostilities. 3. involving physical effort and action: active sports. 4. involving the power of acting; nimble: an active action. 5. characterized by considerable or current action, motion, volume, use, participation, etc.: an active market in wheat; an active list of subscribers. 6. causing change; capable of exerting influence (opposed to passive): active treason. 7. effective (opposed to inert): active ingredients. 8. *Gram.* noting or pertaining to a voice of verbal inflection in which typically the subject of the sentence is represented as performing the action expressed by the verb (e.g., *He is reading*). [*Write in the active*, *He writes every day* (is an active verb). 9. requiring or giving rise to action; practical: the intellectual and the active mental powers. 10. (of a volcano) in eruption. 11. Accounting, profitable; busy: active accounts. 12. interest-bearing: active paper. 13. *Med.* acting quickly; producing immediate effects: active remedies. 14. *Social.* (of a crowd) engaging in purposeful activities, often of a violent nature. 15. *Telecomm.* (def. 16). 16. *Rocketry*, transmitting signals; or active communications satellite. 18. *Milit.* serving on active duty. —*n.* 17. *Gram.* *a.* the active voice, *b.* a form or construction in the active voice. [*L. Activus* (see *act*), *-iv-*; *r.* ME *actif* < MF *actif* < *active*, *adv.* —*ac-tiv-ness*, *n.*]

**-syn.** 1. *active*; working; operative. 2. *Active*, *energetic*, *enterprising*, *vigorous* imply a liveliness and briskness in the performing something. *Active* suggests quickness and diligence as opposed to laziness or dilatory methods: an active and useful person. *Energetic* suggests forceful and intense, sometimes nervous, activity: conducting an energetic campaign. *Enterprising* implies eager and zealous activity with a sense of urgency: making a strenuous effort. *Vigorous* suggests strong, effective activity: using vigorous measures to accomplish an end. 4. *able*, *sprightly*. —*Ant.* 1. 4. *lazy*. 5. *sluggish*.

**active duty**, *Mil.* 1. the status of an active soldier; on active duty. 2. full duty. Also called *active service*.

**active immunity**, *Immunity* resulting from the production of antibodies within an organism.

**active layer**, *the* layer of soil, above the permafrost, that thaws during the summer.

**active list**, a list of military personnel on active duty.

**active principle**, *Med.* the component or components of a crude drug, usually extracted, responsible for the characteristic medicinal effect.

**active reason**, *Aristotelianism*, an activity of intellect, embodying universal truth, potentially present in the mind of every individual, and when present, forming the only immortal part of the individual. *Cf.* passive reason.

**activism** (ak'tiv-iz-əm), *n.* 1. *Philos.* *a.* a theory that a theory of reality is an act or process of some sort, *b.* a theory that reality is based on the activities of the real world outside the mind is one involving continuous activity on the part of the mind. 2. the doctrine or practice of vigorous action or involvement as a means of achieving political goals. [*< G. Aktivism(us)*. See *active*, *-ism*]

**activist** (ak'tiv-ist), *n.* an especially active, vigorous advocate of a political cause. [*Active* + *-ist*]

**activity** (ak'tiv-ē-tē), *n.*, *pl.* -ties. 1. the state or quality of being active; the state of acting; action; doing. 2. the quality of acting promptly; energy. 3. a specific deed, action, function, or episode of behavior. 4. a work or work, esp. elementary grades of school, that involves direct experience by the student rather than textbook study. 5. a use of energy or force; an active movement or operation. 6. normal mental or bodily power, function, or process. 7. liveliness, alertness, or vigorous action: *The movie* is full of activity and noise. 8. *Physical Chem.* the capacity of substances to react combined for the least expenditure. 9. due to the interaction of its constituents. 9. *Physics*, *a.* the number of atoms of a radioactive substance that disintegrate per unit of time, usually expressed in curies. 6. radioactivity. 10. *U.S.* an organizational unit or the function it performs. [*< ML actus* (*is*, of act) (*is*). See *active*, *-ity*]

**active-ize** (ak'tiv-ē-iz), *v.*, *-ized*, *-izing*. to make active; activate. [*Active* + *-ize*]

**act' of faith'**, an act that demonstrates or tests the strength of a person's convictions, as an important personal sacrifice. *Cf.* *act-of-faith*.

**act' of God'**, *Law*, a direct, sudden, and irresistible action of natural forces, such as could not reasonably be prevented by human action.

**Act' of Parliament clock'**, a weight-driven pendulum wall clock of the late 18th century, usually having an unglazed black dial with gilt numbers and a trunk below it to accommodate the end of the pendulum (originally installed in English taverns because of the lack of private clocks due to a burdensome tax).

**Act' of Toleration'**, *Eng. Hist.* the statute (1689) granting religious freedom to dissenting Protestants upon meeting certain conditions, as the rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation.

**Act' of Uniformity'**, *Eng. Hist.* any of the three statutes (1549, 1559, 1562) requiring public worship services in the Anglican Church, esp. the act of 1559 requiring the use of the Book of Common Prayer.

**act' of war'**, an illegal act of aggression by a country against another with which it is normally at peace.

**acupuncture**

**ac-to-my-o-sin** (ak/tō/mī/zō sin), *n.* *Biochem.* A complex protein, consisting of actin and tropomyosin, that is the major contractile element of striated muscle and is thought to interact with ATP to cause muscle contraction. [Act(n) + o- + MYOSIN]

**action** (ak/shŏn), *n.* *Armor.* A quilted garment worn under mail in the 18th and 19th centuries; gambeson. Also, action, aketon, haqueton. [ME < AF *actioun*. OF *a(u)quton* < OFr *aliquot* << Ar al-qutun the cotton]]

**actor** (ak'tor), *n.* 1. Lord (John Smibert Edward Dabry-Ackon, 1st Baron), 1824-1902, English historian. 2. a city in SE England, near London; center of Puritanism at time of Cromwell. 87, 87A (1981)

**actor** (ak'tor), *n.* 1. A person who acts in stage plays, movies, pictures, television, broadcast, etc., esp. professionally. 2. A person who does something; doer; participant. (< L *actor*. See act-, -act)

**Astor** (as'tor), *n.* *Class. Myth.* 1. A brother of King Aegeus, sometimes believed to be the father, by Molones, of Eurytes and Cleopatra. Cf. Molloneus. 2. A son of Myrmidon and Pandion who became king of Phthia.

**actor-dae** (ak tor/dā), *n., pl. Class. Myth.* Molloneus

**actor-proof** (ak'tor prōf'), *adj.* Theat. (of a role or script) effective even if poorly acted. [actor + -proof]

**Actors' Equity Association**, a labor union for actors, founded in 1912 and affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

**actress** (ak'tris), *n.* a female actor. [act(ō)n + -ess]

**Acts of the Apostles**, a book of the New Testament. Also called Acts.

**act/tune**, a musical piece played between the acts of a play in 17th- or early 18th-century England. Cf. entr'acte (def. 8).

**actual** (ak/chŭd əl), *adj.* 1. existing in act or fact; real; *an actual case of treason*; *actual expense*; *the actual cost*; *his explanation was purely actual*; *the actual partition of the house*. 2. *Obs.* pertaining to or involving acts or action. [< LL *actuālis*(s), equiv. to L *actus* —a(-o)-*tualis*; see act- + -LIS -act-(s); ME *actuel* < MF*—*a(-o)-*tualis*, *n.*

—*Gyn.* 1. genuine, variable. See real. —Ant. 1. unreal.

**actual cost**, the cost of a product based on incurred costs of material and labor required in its production. Cf. standard cost.

**Actual Grace**, *Rom. Cath. Ch.* supernatural help given by God to enlighten the mind and strengthen the will so as to avoid evil.

**actu-al-ize** (ak/chŭd ə-līz), *v.t.* -ized, -izing. Chiefly Brit. actualization. —*acu/-tuali-/tion, n.*

**actu-al-ism** (ak/chŭd ə-līz/iz), *n.* *Philos.* the doctrine that all reality is animate or in motion. [ACTUAL + -ISM] —*acu/-tuali-/ist, n., adj.* —*acu/-tuali-/istic, adj.*

**actu-al-ity** (ak/chŭd ə-lī-tē), *n., pl. -ities*, 1. actual existence; reality. 2. actualities, actual conditions or circumstances; facts; *He had to adjust to the actualities of life*. 3. Brit. a television or radio broadcast, or a film or sound recording, of an actual event; documentary. [late ME *actuallie* < ML *actuālis* — (s. of *actuū*).] See actual-, -ity

**actu-al-ize** (ak/chŭd ə-līz), *v.t.* -ized, -izing. To make actual; to achieve in action or fact. Also, *see* Brit., actualization. ACTUAL + -IZE] —*acu/-tuali-/tion, n.*

**actu-al-ly** (ak/chŭd ə-lī), *adv.* as an actual or existing fact; really. [ACTUAL + -LY]

**actu-al-ism**, *Theol.* any sin committed by an individual of his free will, as contrasted with original sin.

**actu-ar-y** (ak'tor-ē-ri), *n., pl. -aries*. 1. Insurance. a person who computes premium rates, dividends, risks, etc., according to probabilities based on statistical records. 2. (formerly) a registrar or clerk. [< L *actuarius*(us) shorthand writer, clerk, var. (with u of *acus apt*) of *actuarius* (*actu(a)* deeds, documents + -arius -ART)] —*actu-ar-i-al* (ak/chŭd ə-lī-ə-l), *adj.* —*actu-ar-i-ally, adv.*

**actu-ate** (ak/chŭd ə-tē), *v.t.* -ated, -ating. 1. to incite to action; impel; motivate; *activated by selfish motives*. 2. to put into action; start a process; turn on: *to activate a machine*. [< ML *actuāre*(us) reduced to action (ptp. of *actuare*), equiv. to L *actus*(o) (see act-) + -ius -ATB] —*acu/-tati-/on, n.* —*acu/-tati-/tor, n.*

**act-wait** (akt/wāt'), *n.* *Theat.* Chiefly Brit. an interval between the acts of a play; an intermission; entr'acte.

**act/ warn-ing**, *Theat.* 1. notification from the manager advising the performers of the amount of time left before they must appear onstage. 2. See act call (def. 1).

**ac-u-e-** (ak'yoo ē), *adj.* sharpened; pointed. [late ME < L *acus*(o) needle + -ATB]

**a-cu-lifer** (ə kyoo/lif-), *n.* sharpness; acuteness; keenness (ACCUSE + -ER); *ML accus-* (s. of *accūs*) (L *accūs*(us) accuse + (-id)-[er])


**a-cu-le-** (ə kyoo/lē), *-lē* (-lē), *adj.* 1. Biol. having or being any sharp-pointed structure. 2. Having a slender ovipositor or sting, as the hymenopterous insects. 3. pointed; stinging. Also, a-cu-le-a-like, [< L *acū-* (*cul-*)(us). See acculeus, -ate]

**a-cu-le-us** (ə kyoo/lē ūs), *n., pl. -lei* (-lē) (-lē). 1. Also, anus. the modified ovipositor or sting of certain hymenopterous insects. 2. prickle (def. 2). [< L, equiv. to *acu(e)* needle + -eus dim. suffix]

**a-cu-men** (ə kyoo/mən, ak'yū-), *n.* superlative mental acuteness; keen discernment; keen and penetrating insight; *the acute and remarkable acumen in business manifest*. [< L: sharpness, equiv. to *acu* (ptp. of *acuer* to sharpen; see *acute*) + -men *n.* suffix] —*acu-mi-nous* (ə kyoo/mə-nəs), *adj.*

**a-cu-min-ate** (adj.) a kyoo/mə nit, -nāv-, s. a kyoo/mə nit, -ad-, *adj.* -ed, -ing. -ing. 1. Dot. 2. To make sharp or keen. (< L *acuminatus* (us) (ptp. of *acumina*), equiv. to *acumin-* (s. of *acutus*) *acumen* + -itus -ATB] —*acu-mi-na-tion, n.*

**acu-punc-ture** (*n.* ak'yoo pūnkchur; *f.* ak'yoo pūnkchur), *n., v.* -tured, -turing. —*v.* 1. A Chinese medical practice that attempts to cure illness by puncturing specific areas of the skin with needles. 2. Med. the puncture of a tissue with a needle, as for drawing off fluids or relieving pain. —*s.t.* 3. to perform an acupuncture on. (< L *acu-* (s. of *acus*) needle + PUNCTURE)

 Acuminated leaf

